A SERMON
PREACHED BEFORE THE Queenes Maieſtie, the. 25. day of February, by Maiſter Edward Dering, in Anno. 1569.
(.˙.)

To the Christian Reader.

OF all the outward benefites that God hath bestowed vpon man (welbeloued and Christian Reader) there is none more profitable vnto the Church of God, then to keepe by writing those things vttered, that are necessary, precious & godly. The voice onely heard, perisheth quickly, & though for a time it worke inwardly, yet such is mans weakenes & infirmity, that it must not onely be by liuely voyce beaten in to his head diligently, but also by writing set before him liuely, and that continually. This Sermon therfore, as it was not long sithens vttered zelously, and no doubt by the purpose of God him selfe (who openeth the mouthes of his Ministers to speake without feare) so nowe especially for their sakes, to whom then it was spokē, it is set out to their farther vew and consideration: that thyngs amysse may be reformed, and true religion sincerly aduaūced, & against this time especially, becāuse that a Parlament is instant & at hand: wherin (if God haue not sealed vs vp to abide more feareful & horrible iudgements) knowen abuses shalbe remoued, and many vnprofitable strifes ended. Surely,

sure-

surely, if now it be neglected, let vs not think long to escape vnpunished. It wylbe to late the third day to intreate for mercy. Tamerlan Gods vengeance, when his blacke tentes are once vp, though we come out neuer so humbly with laurel in our hands, beclad in white garments, yet wil he not be intreated, but by the selfe same syns wherby we haue offēded, with the same we shalbe punished. The Israelits by murmuring and wishyng flesh, synned, and by flesh they were punished. Nu. 11, 2c

The Leuits wife playing the whoore, by hauing her body abused, was killed. Iudi. 19, 2

Salomon the wyse, greatly in Gods fauour at the beginning, sinned through Idols, & therfore was ouercom of Ieroboam an Idolatrer. 1. Reg. 11.

Nadab and Abihu offeryng straunge fire vnto the Lord, wer both of fire consumed. Leuit. 1

Banah & Rechab killing Isboseth, wer killed them selues. 1. Samu. 4

Abimilech killing his brethren, was killed him self of a woman. Iudicu. 9

Adonibezeck, cutting of the thumbes of the hands & feete of 70. kings, was taken him self & vsed after that maner. Iudicu. 1

Ahab the king of Israel, dispising truth & folowing lyes, was iustly plauged of God, when he sent forth a lying sprit to deceiue all his Prophets. 1. Regu.

Terrible is that threatning of Ezechiel, when he sayth that

Dering, E.

God wyll ſeduce both Prophet and people,
that they both may periſh in lyes, whych
Zech. 14. haue refuſed to follow him in truth. As for
you O houſe of Iſrael (ſaith the lord) go you
Ezech. 30, 39 and ſerue euery one his Idol, ſeyng that you
wil not obay me. VVhat ſhould I rehearſe
any more examples? the ſcriptures are full,
and they are written for our learning, vpon
whom the endes of the world are come, that
we ſhould take hede and beware, leaſt we of-
fend & periſh as they did: for if we be equal
with thē in ſin & diſobedience, it may ſafely
be pronoūced that we ſhal fele the ſame pu-
niſhments. Happy therfore is that Prince &
Country that heareth Gods Miniſters wyth
full purpoſe of obedience, & happy ar thoſe
Miniſters that in the power and ſtrength of
Gods ſpirit, and in aſſurance of their calling,
teach all men their duties without blaūching
and flattery, whatſoeuer countenaunce they
beare vpon this ſtage of ſhort continuance,
whether they be Princes or inferiours. For
herein appeareth Gods loue towards thē, in
awaking them out of the vaniſhing dreames
of their lothſome pleaſures, to the perfor-
mance of his worke, which he wyll not haue
ſo neglected, that they ſhal prefer any world
ly thing whatſoeuer before it, Now therfore

Gods

Gods Church ſo lōg time neglected, we truſt ſhalbe regarded, & the good counſels of the Lord, brought by his Meſſengers & ſeruāts, obeyed. It is not vnknowen what blind and ignorant miniſters ar in the church, what cō tempt crepeth vpon it dayly: what diuiſion hath ryſen in the ſame for the Popes trappings, the tayl of Antichriſt, & the outward markes of the Romiſh beaſt: what hurt the quarel of them hath done to many, what diſcredite it hath brought to a nūber: what ſorrow to all the godly: vvhat ioy to the vvycked. Now if they vvyl not amend it, but yet through worldly pollicy retain it, reſpecting the ſtrength of fleſh & bloud, let them think that this neglect of Gods ſpirit ſpeakyng in hys Prophets, vvyth ſuch open contempt in denying to follow the knowen truth, cannot but prouoke Gods heauy & hot vengeaunce ſpedely to be poured out vpon vs. The Sun, Moone and Stars haue already at hys commaūdement frō heauen threatned vs. Bloudye cloudes haue appeared to terrifye vs: Straunge Monſters, earthquakes, vnnaturall ſwelling of flouds & vvaters, & to conclude vnwonted mouinges of the earth haue bene fearful vnto vs: If theſe vvil not ſerue, more vehement ſickneſſes, famine and hunger, ciuill

vil wars & bloudſhed, vvith the taking away of our ſoueraigne (vvich God forbid, & rather bleſſe vvith true godlynes & long lyfe to raigne ouer vs) in the meaſure of our ſins vvyl God poure out vpon vs, and ſo we ſhal periſh in his iuſtice vtterly, that in mercy refuſed to embrace his truth obediently.

Therefore from the higheſt to the loweſt let vs returne to the Lord ſpedely and vnfaimedly: ſo ſhal Gods Church be reformed, our Miniſtery amended, the ſeruice of God by the infallible rule of hys truth directed. The Hireling, timeſeruer, and woolfe remoued, the godly and true Miniſter wel prouided for and defended, & all ſtraunge worſhips, ſtraunge garmentes beſtayned with popiſh filthines, and monumentes that can repreſent nothing to our eyes but execrable Idolatrie, be quite abandoned. VVhich God in his great mercye bring to paſſe for his Sonne Chriſtes ſake. Amen.

(˙.˙)

Farewell gentle Reader, and vſe thys Sermon to thy comfort. I. F.

¶ A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE Queenes Maiestie, the 25. day of February, by Mayster Edward Deryng. 1569.

¶ O Lord open thou my lyps, & my mouth shall shew forth thy prayse.

PSALME 78.70.

¶ He chose Dauid hys Seruaunt also, and tooke hym from the shepefoldes, euen from behinde the Ewes great vvith yong tooke he hym: to feede hys people in Iacob, and hys inheritaunce in Israel. So he fed them accordyng to the simplicity of hys hart, and guided them by discretion of hys handes.

THe Prophet declareth in thys Psalme, how God of his instice, for the great sinne of Ephraim, tooke from that tribe doth the Tabernacle and the Scepter, & gaue them to the tribe of Iuda: whom then according to his mercy he had purposed to blesse with al perfect happynes. In which we learne not to abuse Gods mercies, least they be taken away frō vs, as from the tribe of Ephraim they were. And then what helpeth it vs that in times past we haue ben happy? And least this should happen also vnto the tribe of Iuda, to fal from Gods mercies, into his displea-

displeasure: the Prophet in this place stirreth the vp to thankfulnes, that they may be found worthy to haue continued toward them so great blessings. And this he doth by exãple of Dauid, in shewing both how mercyfully God had delt with him, and how obediently Dauid walked before the Lord.

Three reasons.

And herein he vseth as it were three reasons to moue them wythall: The fyrst is of Gods great mercy whence he had called Dauid. The seconde is of Gods intent & purpose whereunto he called him. The third of Dauids own person how faithfully and how truly he did execute that wherunto he was called. The first argument or reason he comprehendeth in these wordes: He chose Dauid hys Seruaunt, and tooke hym from the shepefoldes. The second in these wordes: He chose him to fede his people in Iacob, & his inheritance in Israel. The third in these wordes. So he fed them according to the simplicitie of his hart, & guided them with the discretion of his handes. These argumentes wyll I speake of, as God shall geue me vtterance. And if they shall be now more effectuall to moue vs, then they were then to moue the people of Israel: then be we profitable and happy hearers. If not, it is good right & reason, that as we haue beene in the fellowshyp of the same synne and iniquitye, so we should be partakers of the same rewarde and punishment: that if God shall so deale wyth vs, that we loose agayne both the Tabernacle and Scepter, as they haue done before vs, we can say no other but the Lord is righteous, and beholde we haue eaten the fruite of our own labours. Let vs therefore consider of these argumentes, and fyrst

vp

vp as we may the gyft of God that is in vs, that at length we may learne by them more holye obedience.

The first argument is the good consideration of Gods mercies whēce he called Dauid. Which argument alone is so effectuall and strong to styr vs vp to the obedience of our calling that it is able ynough to rayse vs againe, though we were neuer so deepe soonken in rebellion. A sure proofe of the efficacie of it may be vnto vs the oft and continuall vse of it in the sacred scriptures. For seyng that Gods spirit in his holy word doth so oft apply it, both as a helpe to confirme the godlye, and as a present remedy to turne againe the most obdurate and wylfull synner from hys obstinate purpose: surelye, except all the dewes of Gods mercies be marueilouslye dryed vp in our barren hartes, the same argument if we can well thinke of it, wyl be effectuall in vs to woorke our regeneration in the newnes of life. When God would haue Abraham to forget his country and his fathers house, to go that long and weary iourney into the land of promyse, wher he and his posterity should dwel after him, he confirmed him wyth thys saying: I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of Vr of the Chaldeans. Gen, 15. By thys remēbrance of hys former benefits he perswaded Abraham to aduenture all that he presently enioyed, vpon hope of a better promise, which yet he had not sene, but which should be fulfilled.

When God would moue the Children of Abraham, that is the children of Israel, to turne againe from their great iniquities ỹ they had so long practised in the hardnes of their hart, he vseth but this argument, to tell them of all the miseries that they

were borne in: their country to be a cursed coun-
Iosu.24.2 try: their fathers idolaters, them selues geuen o-
Gen.11.31 uer to all bolyptuousnes and pleasure, not regar-
Exo.3.10. ding God, nor seking his religion. In which wo-
Exo.12.37 full estate when the Lord God did behold them, he
pitied their misery, and sayd euen then vnto them:
You shall lyue. By which promise their for-
mer vo vanished away: and in stede of nakednes
they were clothed with broidred worke, they wer
couered with fine silke, decked with manye orna-
ments, & had a crowne of beuty vpon their heads.
Iosu.23.16 Now therfore that they should not walke in their
Esa.43.34 owne waies, or commit Idolatrye as other Gen-
Eze.16.6. tils did, nor treade such benefits vnder their feete:
this argument as a strong medecine the Prophet
repeated often, and with many wordes.

2.Samuel Thus God delt oft with the Kynges of Israel
12.7. 8.9. and of Iuda, when they began to fall awaye, and
2.Samuel walke as other nations walked that were rounde
15.17.18.19 about them. He called them back by putting them
1.Regum oft in mynde, how his mercy had bene with them,
14.7.8.9 and from what low estate he had raysed them vp.
1.Regum Thus the Prophets of God dealt often wyth the
16.2.3.4. people. Iosua, when he had brought them into
Iosu.24.2. the land of Chanaan, to the ende they might feare
God, and so make theyr dwelling sure, he made
vnto them a long repetition of Gods benefites,
that by remembraunce of them theyr dull spirites
might be styrred vp the more obediently to follow
1.Samuel God. Samuel, when he was afrayde of Gods
10.18. heauy displeasure towardes the people of Israell,
because they had asked a King for them: to thend
they might turne away Gods anger from them by
their speedy repentaunce, he told them what God
had before done for them, as a ready way to make
them beware afterward, how they did willyngly
offend

offend so louing a father. Steuen, when he would haue perswaded those, whose iniquitye was now growen to so full measure, that they had crucified Christ, as though in this alone were the greatest hope of amendement, he chose no other way to conuert them, but this, to shewe in long exhortation what God had doue for thē, and for their fathers. And this, as in the beginning it was geuen by the holy Ghost to man, as a souerayne medecine to keepe him far from vnthankfulnes: so it hath ben continued by the same spirite from time to time to stirre vs vp not to forget the Lord. Our Sauiour Christ to make hys Disciples sure, and that they should neuer shrinke for aduersitie, he tolde them often this, that they had not chosen him, but he had chosen them. Saint Paul, when he would moue the Corinthians for to auoide the false Apostels, and to followe Christ, hee perswaded them thus, that in times past they were Gentiles, and were willingly lead away to dum Idoles. And agayne to the Ephesians: You were in tymes past dead in trespasses and synnes, you walked after the Prince that ruleth in the ayre, after the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: but God who is ritch in mercies, through the great loue wherwith he loued vs, euen vvhen we were dead, hath quickened vs in his sonne Christ.

Act. 7. 2.

Ioh. 15. 16.

1. Cor. 12. 2.

Ephe. 2. 2.

This argument, dearely beloued, seyng it is so strong, let vs apply it vnto our selues, for our disease cleaueth fast vnto our bones with long continuance, and we haue neede of sharpe medecine to heale it againe. Let vs therfore vse it (I beseech you) and if Gods spirit haue not forsaken vs, that

we be vncurable, no doubt we shall recouer and grow to amendement. Let vs see our own estate, & what God hath done for vs, what cloudy daies haue gone ouer our heads, & in how fayre sunshine we be set agayne, and no doubt wher sinne hereafter shal allure vs as before, it wyll make vs afraide of hys deceptfull bayte, and we wyll neuer be brought with the beuty of the golden cup to drink of the spirituall whoredomes that are within. We were in tymes past Gentiles, and vncircumcised people, now Christ hath pulled downe the waule of seperation, and made vs all one, euen his Children of adoption. We were aliantes from the common wealth of Israel, now we are receiued as citizens in the companye of his faythfull. We were straungers from the couenaunt and promise, now Christ hath deliuered a new Testament, in which we also are wrytten heyres of mercye. We lyued sometime in ignoraunce, and had no hope, now we haue receiued knowledge, and are comforted. We were without God in the world, & could no wher lay downe the terrours of our sinnes, but now we haue receiued the spirite of adoption, by which we cry, Abba Father. And what should I say more? we were subiect vnto synne, hell, death & condemnation: now Christ hath spoyled the principalities and powers, deliuered vs out of the power of darknes, translated vs into a kingdom of immortalitie and grace. Except we haue set our hartes as an Adamant stone, or as the Prophet sayth, made our harts and faces lyke the flint: it is impossible but that this cogitation should moue vs: Or if it do not, surely, surely, though the Lord had not spoken it thus eftē vnto vs, or if the scripture were not wrytten for our instruction, yet the law of Nature would condemne vs for most vnthankfull

Ephe. 2. 11. 12.

Ro. 8. 15.

Col. 2. 15.

Col. 1. 13.

Ezec. 3. 9.

full men. Day and night we should beare a wytnes in our own conscience, how fearful iudgement God hath reserued for so great iniquitye. Who amongst vs could beare it, to be rewarded with vnthankfulnes, where we haue well deserued? To be contemned of those, whom we raysed vp to honour? To be spoyled of those, whom before wee had clothed? To be betrayed of those, whom we haue especiallye trusted? And howe then are wee blynde and vnderstand nothyng? Howe shall the Lord beare it at our handes, if we be vnthankfull vnto him, if we contemne him, rob him of his honour, who alone hath made vs glorious, when we were couered with our own shame and confusion? The Lord graunt vs his holy spirite, that we deceyue not our selues.

Ther is nothing more effectual to moue a sonne to obedience, then to know he hath a louing father. Nothing maketh so trusty the bondseruant, as to remember hee hath a gentle Mayster. Nothyng maketh the subiect more faithful vnto his Prince, then to feele by good experience hys Princes clemencye. Nothing ioyneth man faster in the bond of friendship, then to consider wel what his friend hath done for him. And let nothyng bynde our obedience more carefully to the worde and wyll of God, then that he hath so long continued merciful vnto vs. As sure as the Lord doth lyue, thys is his holye truth: hee that cannot be moued wyth this, he hath not Gods holy spirit: Poore or rich, bond or free, hye or low, Noble or of low degree, Prince or subiect, al is one. The remembrance of Gods mercy must make vs all thankful, were we neuer so mighty. This cogitation must banish far from vs the pride of a kingdome, to thynke howe God hath raysed vs from the shepefolds. Whoso-

euer can say thus: I haue bene bonde, but I am free: I haue bene in daunger, I am in safety: I haue bene fearful and trembling, I am careles: I haue bene ful of sorow, now my soule is at rest: I haue bene in misery, I am in dignity: I haue bene a prisoner, I am a Prince: beleue me, beleue me, if the great and goodly Cities, which he buylded not: if the houses ful of al maner of gold, which he filled not: if the vineyardes & Oliue trees, which he planted not, did not make him forget the Lord, which brought him out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: If prosperitye haue not made him dronken, so that he hath banished farre from him all sense and vnderstanding, the remembrance of this thing wyl make him thankful vnto hym that hath bene the worker.

Yea, euen you that are now a Princes of Maiestie, if you haue felt any such alteration, take heede, flye farre away from all vnthankfulnes. If you haue sene the dayes, in which you haue sayde: O Lord, I haue no friend but thee alone, now that prosperity hath brought vnto you a great many of faire countenaunces, forget not that God, who was your onely Friende in trouble. If in tymes past you haue prayed that you might not build vpon the sand, to haue your house shaken with euery blast of wynde: now that you haue choyce of your own ground, take heede I beseech you, where you lay your foundation. Now that the Sterne and Helme is in your own hand, guyde your Shyp, so that the waues do not ouer run it. If you haue prayed in tymes past vnto God to molify your enemies hartes, and to bring their cruell practises to nothing: now that you your selfe are set in safety, be not cruel vnto Gods anoynted, & do hys Prophets no harme. I nede not seeke far for offences, wherat

Math. 7. 26.

Psalme. 105. 15.

wherat Gods people are greeued: euen round about this Chappell I see a great many, and God in his good time shal roote them out. If you haue sayd sometime of your selfe: tanquam ouis, as a Sheepe appoynted to be slayne, take heede you heare not now of the Prophet, tanquam indomita Iuuenca, as an vntamed & vnruly Heiffer. I wyl not with many woordes admonish your Maiesty that are wyse inough: onely I wyll say this, returne vnto your own hart, and search your raynes. And here I set before you the tribunall seate of Christ. If you knowe these thynges to be true, discharge the fayth you owe: greeue not your quyet conscience, least it begyn to accuse you, and the burthen of it be greater, then you shall be able to beare. If God haue defended you mightely, as euer he did Dauid the Prophet: discharge your fayth wyth the Prophet Dauid, and cry in spirit: Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quæ retribuunt mihi? what shall I gene vnto the Lord for all those benefites that hee bestowed vpon me? Psalme. 44.22. Ieremy. 31.18. Psalme. 116.12.

And thus muche as God hath geuen me vtteraunce, I haue noted vnto you out of the first part of this scripture, how that God dyd chuse Dauid from the shepefold. The Lord gene you grace to confesse his goodnes, and shewe your selues more thankfull for all hys benefites. One other thyng we may note here, that all that we haue of God, it is of his fre mercy, it is not of our deseruing, euen as he gaue both the Tabernacle and the Scepter vnto the tribe of Iuda, because he loued it. So God gaue vnto hys people a lande that flowed with milke and hony, but he gaue it not for their righteousnes, for they were a froward people, but Iosu. 5.6.

because

because he loued them. So God delt fauourably with Sion, that is with the Children of Israel, not because of their obedience, for they were a rebellious nation: but because hee remembred hys othe which he sware vnto their forefathers. So God fulfilled the prophecy of Jacob, and he blessed Judah, but he fulfilled it in Dauid, whom he tooke from the sheepfoldes. So Christ made hys kyngdome euerlasting in the house of Jacob, but he layd first the foundation of it. And nowe hee hath builded it vp neyther by the wysedome of the wyse, nor by the vnderstanding of the prudent, but to testify vnto vs hys free grace and mercy. Hee hath chosen the foolish thinges of this worlde, to confound the wyse, and the weake things of thys world to confound the mighty: and vyle thinges of the world which ar despised, to bring to nought the things that ar esteemed & had in reputation, for this cause alone (as the scripture witnesseth) that no flesh should reioyce in hys presence.

Deut. 1,8
Genesis. 49.6.

1. Corin. 1.27. and 28.29.

This hee doth to beate downe mans pryde.

But what nede we so far to seeke for examples? Let vs behold our selues how plentifully at thys day are Gods mercies and benefites poured out vpon vs, both vpon our Queene, and vpon her people. How myghtelye doth he defend vs in so many daūgers? How syt we here in safety, when all the world is on an vproze? And is this thinke you, of our deseruing, or rather of Gods mercye? Now surely, surely, we were very blynde, if we would not all confesse with the Prophet Jeremy, that it is Gods mercye that we be not consumed. So much disobedience both in Prince and Subiect, so little care of deuty, so deepe forgetfulnes of God: what doth it els deserue, but heauy iudgement? what can it testifye els, but that all these blessinges are of mercye? well, well, tye wyfest

Lament 3.22.

way

way is to take heede in time. Let not our syns se-
perate betwene God and vs. If ther be no wher
examples that we can looke vpon, yet let vs be-
ware by the trioe of Ephraim, that we abuse not
Gods mercies, for fear we lose them. Because we
are now out of daũger, and ther is no peril that is
present, let vs not therfore say as proud Babilon:
I sit like a Queene, & shal see no euil, I shal
bea Lady for euer, and shall see no losse of
Children. He that thinketh he stands (saith
Paule) let him take heede he fal not. It is
no good argument that our estate is sure, because
God hath deliuered vs out of a great mani of trou-
bles. May, let vs the rather feare, and be the more
circumspect. Gods arme that hath bene stretched
out for our safegarde in tymes past, is not nowe
drawne in that he cannot agayne greue vs. God
deliuered the people of Israel out of the hands of
many & greuous enemies: but yet when the peo-
ple of Israel would in no wise amend, God could
rayse vp Salmanasar to leade them away to per-
petual captiuity. Nai, we haue a great many more
fearefull examples then thys. We haue fearefull
examples before our eyes, to take heede of Gods
iudgements, when we abuse his graces. God de-
fended Senacherib in the conquest of a great ma-
ny of Countries, in al which he escaped harmelesse:
yet when he knew not hym selfe, but blasphemed
the God of Israel, euen before the wawles of Je-
rusalem, God could finde hym out at home in hys
own country, and in the Temple of his Idols his
own sonnes slew him. Agamemnon ten yeres to-
gether in mortall and bloudy warres, could neuer
be hurt: yet after, at home in his own house by his
own wyfe he was kylled. Bibulus a noble Ro-

Esa. 59. 2.

Ap. 18. 7.

1. Corin. 10. 12.

2. Regu. 17. 6. 18. 9

2. Re. 18. 9

Esa. 37. 12 38.

Agamẽ-non

Bibulus.

maine, gat manye victories, and kyll escaped peryl: yet afterward in the City of Rome, when he should haue had the glory of all his valiant actes, and rode through the streetes in the pryde of hys triumphe, a tyle fallyng from the house, stroke so deepe into hys head, that it kylled hym presently.

Julius Cæsar.

Julius Caisar, in wynnyng the west part of the world, in .51. set battayles neuer receyued daungerous stroke: yet after all hys daungers so happely escaped, at home in the Senate house, in the myddest of hys Nobilitye, and in hys Parlament robes he receyued .24. woundes, and all of them deadly. Many such examples are before our eyes to make vs beware and take hede of security, whē any daunger is past: and to take hede of forgetfulnes, when we haue receiued mercy. The Lord enrich vs with the graces of his spirit, that when we often behold from whence we haue bene delyuered, we maye seeke diligentlye, and be alwayes carefull how to be found thankfull.

The second argument.

The second argument whych I layd the Prophet vsed, to make the people thankful, was taken of Gods intent and purpose, to what ende he chose Dauid, and that hee sheweth in theese woordes: To feede hys people in Iacob, and hys inheritaunce in Israell. Theese woordes are verye playne, and contayne so expresslye what is the

The office & dutye of Princes and Magistrates.

duty of any Prince or Magistrate, that none can be ignorannt, but he that wyl not know. For this purpose they are chosen: To feede Gods people in Iacob, and hys inheritaunce in Israel. whether he be Prince or Emperor, Duke, Earle Lord, Counsellour, Magistrate whatsoeuer, for thys purpose he is called, discharge it as well as he wyll: He must feede Gods people in Iacob

cob, and his inheritance in Israel. O if God had called them for some other purpose, how gladly would they haue executed it? If God had called them to dyling and cardyng, to swearyng and lying, to pride and vanitie, the myghty men of our dayes, how busely had they done their duty? But alas, this is not: To feede Gods people in Iacob, nor hys inheritaunce in Israel. This is to feede our selues. Euen as the Oxe is fed to the slaughter house, so we do feede our selues to euerlasting confusion. They that haue eares to heare, let them heare. God had chosen his rulers, To feede hys people in Iacob, and hys inheritaunce in Israell. These are the playne and expresse wordes of Gods spirite: and then what outragious spirite is that, or what Furye rather, that cryeth thus wyth an impudent face, that the Prince hath not to do wyth Iacob, and may not meddle wyth Israel? But these are the steps that the man of syn should treade, to speake agaynst the Lord, and yet say that he can not erre. These are the liuely markes of Antichrist, thus to fight agaynst Christ, and yet say he is hys Vicar. Such is all the religion of Papistry, examine it if you wyll euen from poynt to poynt. Where God sayth one thing, it sayth styll contrary, and yet crieth wyth shame inough, there is no errour in it. God sayth, it is the doctrine of Deuils to forbyd mariage, and the lawfull vse of meates: the Pope presumptuously forbiddeth both, and yet saith styl that he hath the holye Ghost. Paule the Apostle saith: If you obserue dayes and tymes, I am afrayde that the Gospell is preached vnto you in vayne; The Pope sayth, you shall ob-

Mat. 11. 15

1. Timo. 4. 3.

Galat. 4. 10. 11.

serue both. I can dispence with the Apostle, and
Pet.2.13. yet he saith he is Apostolical. Saint Peter saith:
Be you subiect to the Prince, as to the chiefest: The Pope sayth, the King is not highest, but he is aboue both King and Kesar, and yet he saith still he is the Successor of Peter. And what should I say more? It greeueth me to recken vp all that monsters abominations. It would make a Christian hart to bleed, to see how he hath deceiued the simple. With his paper swaules and painted fiers he made them so afrayde, that they beleued all thinges whatsoeuer he had spoken. But
Apocal. 22.11. he is filthy, and let him be filthy still. We will returne to our purpose, & learne of a Princely Prophet what is a Princes duty. He must feede Iacob and Israel, that is, Kings must be nurce fathers, and Queenes must bee Nurces vnto the
Esaye. 49.23. Church of God. And to this ende they must vse their autority, that Gods children may learne vertue and knowledge. For to seeke onelye worldlye peace and security, or to make vs liue at ease here in this wayfaring city, that is rather to feede flesh
Hebre. 1.14. and blud, then to feede Iacob: rather to make happy thys worldlye fellowship. then to instruct Israell. The true Israelite is strong against the Lord, and commeth with violence to clayme the kyngdome of heauen. What helpeth it in thys respect to be rytche or honorable? If I had all the
Psalme. 49.78. ritches in the world, yet could I not pay the price of my brothers soule. Or if I had neuer so much rule and authority, I am not therfore the nearer to make intercession vnto God. They
Ephe.6.13 Mat.22.11 are other weapons that must preuail against Sathan: and it is an other attyre that will be accepted for the mariage garment. If we will feede

Iacob

Iacob and Israel, let vs leade them to the house of wysedome, and trayne them vp in the feare of God. The Lord open the Queenes Maiesties eyes, that shee may looke to this charge: Otherwyse if we lyued neuer so peaceably vnder her, yet when the Lord shall come to aske accompt of her stewardship, how she hath fed her fellow seruants with the meate appoynted them, then shee wyll be found eating and drinking with sinners. Luke.12. 42.46.

But because wee are so dull of hearing, that a lyttle teachyng of our dutye is not sufficient for vs, I wyl shew out of the Scriptures somwhat more plainly, if ought may be playner, what is the dutye of a Prince. The Prophet Esay verye effectually setteth it out in the person of our Sauiour Christ, saying: Righteousnes shal be the girdle of his loynes, and faithfulnes the buckle of his raynes. It is true that the Prince must defende the fatherlesse and wyddowe, relieue the oppressed, and haue no respect of persons in iudgement, seeke peace vnto hys people, and gyrd hym selfe with righteousnesse: But this is also hys duty, and his greatest duty, to be careful for religion, to mayntaine the Gospel, to teach the people knowledge, and buylde hys whole gouernaunce wyth faythfulnes. For this cause king Salomon, both the mightiest and the wysest kyng that euer was, called him selfe a Preacher. And king Dauid, to testifye how he acknowledged his dutye, spake openly to hys people: I vvyll instruct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go, & I vvyll guide thee wyth myne eye. This generall rule kyng Salomon gaue vnto other: Be diligent to know the estate of thy flocke, & take heede vnto thy Heardes. For ryches Esay.11.3 Psal.32.8 Prouerb 27.23.24

remayne

remayne not alwayes, neyther the crowne from generation, to generation: Expressely shewing, that to encrease ryches, or to set forth the glory of a kingdome, that is not the greatest deuty of a Magistrate. Thus the Prophet Hoseas, crying out against the people of Israel, he reckeneth vp this as their greatest disorder, that lying and swearing, & ignorance of God was not punished amongest them. Hos. 4. 2

And alas (dearely beloued) if this be the saying of the Prophet, let vs looke vnto it. I dare not but speake the truth, seyng God hath called me hether. He hath raysed me vp so hye, when I was cast downe, that I cannot forget his benefites. If this will not serue, I wil surely spake it more playnely, when the Lord shall open my mouth againe. Surely if this be the saying of the Prophet (as it is in deede) that lying, that swearing, that blynde and wylfull ignorance shall be punished, let not the Princesse deceiue her self, the spirite of God doth not possess her hart, if she heare daylye, lying and blasphemous swearing, and see the peoples ignorance, and yet leaue all vnpunished. Looke vnto these things better, if you wyl looke well vnto your selfe: you cannot pretend ignorance, thys is playne inough, if anye thyng be inough. And yet least you should seeke to buselye to be deceiued, I wyll rehearse the playne law of the Lord. That this doctrine may be warranted with the surer witnesses, God sayth of a kyng in the. 17. of Deuteronomy: When he shal syt vpon the throne of his kingdome, then shal he write him this lawe repeated in a booke, by the Priestes of the Leuites. And it shall be with him, and he shall reade therein all Deutero. 17. 18, 19. &c.

the

the dayes of hys life: That he may learne to feare the Lord hys God, and keepe all the vvords of his Law, and these couenantes, for to do them. That hys hart be not lifted vp aboue his brethren. That he turne not aside from these commaundementes, neyther to the right hand, nor to the leaft. But that he may prolong hys dayes in his kingdome, he and hys Sonnes in the myddest of Israell.

This law I know not how your Maiesty shal interpreate, because I know not your spirite: but of this I am sure, it made Dauid, that he would not suffer a wycked man in hys house. It made Asa driue awaye the Sodomites out of Israell, put downe the Idoles, depose hys owne mother from her dignity. It made Iosaphat, Ezechias, Iosias, euen in the begynnyng of their raygne, to make godly and zealous reformations in religion, and neuer consulted farther with the hye Priests. Nay, it made Salomon to put downe Abiathar that was the hie Priest, and to place Sadoc a better in his roome. This made many godlye Emperours in the primitiue Church, to call generall counsels, to reforme manye mysorders crept into the church: to depose many ambitious and proud Popes, and place better in theyr roome. And he that denyeth this, denyeth the Sunne to shyne at noone daies. And as this law hath thus wrought heretofore: so when it lighteth in a good spirit, I am sure it wyll doe the lyke hereafter. It wyll moue a godlye Magistrate, to haue hys chiefest care to mayntaine religion, and to suppresse superstition. And such is Gods righteous iudgement, that whosoeuer shall do the contrarye, I am sure hys

Psalme. 10.7.
1. Regum 15.12.13.
1. Regum 22.41.
2. Re. 8.4
1. Regum 19.4.
1. Reg. 2.3

hys own conscience wyll condemne hym selfe. It is the law of nature, and it maketh the most wyckedst Magistrate to sigh and say in his hart, in remembraunce of hys synne: Sure this doing wyll not last alwaye, God hath appoynted me for some other purpose. This was the greatest fault that proud Agamemnon could finde in all the glory of hys kingdome, τὰ θεῶν ὀρθωθέντα ἀνέτρεψε τὸν βίον. When Gods cause goeth not vpright, it layeth the glorye of my kyngdome in the dust, it turneth vpsidowne all my lyfe & happines Thus it happeneth with the wycked whosoeuer they are: they condemne their own doyng, when they seeke not to set out the glorye of God. The law of God hath thus commaunded it, the godly kynges of Juda and Jerusalem haue euermore practised it, the faithful Emperours in the primitiue Church made it their chiefest studye, the law of nature hath ingrauen it in the hart of man: and what godly Prince can now sleepe in securitye, if he haue no care vnto it? Especially seyng God is God of all Magistrates, and they are hys creatures. This is their greatest study, to shew obedience vnto hym, to feede hys people, and set forth hys religion.

Agamemnon.

But here I think some wil easely say: If this be so as you teache it, then the case is cleare, the Prince is a spirituall Magistrate: It belongeth vnto him to reforme religion: he is ỹ hiest Judge in the Church of God, to establish ỹ by law which the law of God hath appoynted. Howe then that the Pope seeth not this? why doe not others see it, that reade and know the scriptures? The Emperours them selues, why haue not they seene it? How grew the Pope vp to such vnbrideled autoritie? How the Pope should come to so great autozity.

tozity, I know no cause but this, that it was the
wyll of God, and such was the depth of his secret
iudgements: The purple whore would make all Apocal.
the Princes of the earth to drynke of the cups of 17.2.4.
her fornications. But for the Popes seing or not
seyng of hys own abominacions, I know not hys
eye sight, I cannot tell whether he doth see them,
or see them not, but I thinke he seeth them. For
I see in all ages, howe God hath raysed vp some
that haue inuayed bitterly against his intollerable
pride. If he seeth it not, hys eyes are verye sicke,
and him selfe a verier beast then euer was Nabu-
chodonosor. And the Lord be praysed, that hath Daniel.
hardened his proud hart, & reuealed better know- 4.30.
ledge vnto litle ones. Why other should not see it Math.11.
that reade the scriptures as well as we, and are 25.
as well learned as we, I can assigne no other
cause, but say wyth the Prophet, Gods iudge-
ments are lyke to a great depth. They are as they
are, and what they are it skylleth nothing vnto
vs. I came not hether to compare with learning,
who be Hebrues, and who be none. I am sure, if 2. Cor. 11.
they did seeke him in the simplicity of theyr hart, Psal. 36 6
and call after hym in the truth, not in theyr own Iere. 2. 13.
inuencions, that then they should finde him. Now
they seeke the lyuing sprynges in vayne, because
they seeke them in the puddels that they haue dig-
ged them selues. And they seeke for the Gospell
of saluation in vayne, because they follow the doc- Mat. 15. 9
trine that is but precepts of men. But what if
many learned see it not? Is it not therfore truth,
that is so playne in the scriptures?

Let me aske againe I beseech you this question: Ex. 7. 20.
Why dyd not Pharao see, that Moyses & Aaron Ex. 8. 26.
were sent of God? They turned all hys waters Exo. 8. 19
into bloud: They brought vpon hym Frogs that

Ex.8.24. couered all hys lande: They plagued hym wyth
great swarmes of Lyce and Flyes: They feared
Exo.9.23 him with thunders and lightning, and with great
Ex.10.22 tempests: They made darkenes thicke & sensible
Ex.12.29 vpon the face of the earth: They slewe the fyrst
Ex.14.21 borne of all that was in the land: Why knewe not
28. Pharao that they were sent of God? They deui-
ded the read sea, and went thorowe en drye lande:
What madnes made him venter to go so desperat-
ly after? Why woulde he not be taught, tyll the
water couered him and all hys host? Should the
age that came after him reason thus against Isra-
ell: If your God be the Lord of heauen & earth,
why dyd not our Fathers knowe hym? Why did
not the Scribes and Pharises know Christ to be
Ioh.1.27. the Messias? They hearde John Baptist geue
him playne testimonye: why dyd they not beleue
him? The same Christ fulfilled all that was spo-
ken by the Prophets: why could they not see that
Mat.11.5. he was the Sauiour of the world? He made the
blynde to see, the deafe to heare, the dum to speake,
the lame to go. Hee made the sycke and diseased
Mat.9.4 whole. He raysed vp the dead: he told vnto them
Ioh.11.34 euen their thoughts and cogitations. How were
they so dull of vnderstanding, that yet they could
not know hym? If thys may be sufficient to re-
proue a truth (why do not other see it,) then the
Pharises reason well agaynst Christ, when they
Ioh.7.48 said vnto the people: why do none of the Princes
and Rulers beleue in him?

But see I beseche you, how great is our mad-
nes that thus reason of other men, why they see or
Mat.7.3 see not. Why haue wee our selues so great beames
in our eyes, that wee cannot see our owne estate
He.13.14 and condition? Why do wee not see the shortnesse
of our lyfe, but thus lyue in the world, as though
we

we should lyue euer? Seing we haue a righteous God, that wyll be a reuenger of hys owne cause, and punish our transgressions, why do we synne yet dayly more and more? Seing our life is but a vapour, and all our glorye is but as the flower in the field, why be we so bewitched with loue of so great vanity? Seing our estate shalbe before God euerlastyng, and these accompted dayes come so fast to an end, that we shal be spedely called: why be we stil so careles in what sort we shal appeare? Seyng Gods threatnynges are so neare vnto vs, and the daungers that hang ouer our heads are so many: seing Gods iudgements are so fearful, and his wrath burning for euer: why are we so careless? And why is it yet true, that was spoken so long agone? Roma.3. Ro.2.2.3. Iam.4.14 Esa.4.6. Iohn.5.24 Iohn.8.1

Heu viuunt homines tanquam mors nulla sequatur:

Aut velut infernus fabula vana foret?

Why do we lyue as though we should neuer dye, and as though hell fyer were an old wyues fable? Beleue me, beleue me, this is intollerable blyndnes, seing we be so bleare eyed our selues, that we cannot see before vs neyther heauen nor hell, yet that we wil reason agaynst Gods truth, by anye mans eye sight whether he see or se not. If we list to maruel at the dulnes of mans eyes, we cannot well maruel at any thing so much, as at our owne foolishnes, that cānot se our selues. Let vs looke at the last to our own estate, & as for other men let vs leaue them vnto the Lord, he doth knowe most assuredly who be his. They are not the wyse and prudent of this world that he hath chosen. There are not many Princes and noble men in the face of his Church. If Princes and Magistrates wyll Ioh.10. 2. Timo 2 19. 1.Cor.1.

be stil rebellious, what is that to vs? If the Pope and his hirelynges wyl be blynde stil, yet the scripture is the scripture. The vnfaythfull Steward neuer lyueth more riotously, then when hys Lord is euen at hand to call him to his accompts. The foolish Virgins are neuer faster a slepe, thē when the Bridegrome is ready to enter into hys wedding chamber. The childzen of this world are neuer busselier occupied, then the nyght before theyr soules shall bee taken from them. The Sonne of perdition shall neuer be more lokye, then in these latter dayes when hee shall be reuealed. But for these that are so blynde, let them be blynde stil: let vs approch vnto the throne of grace with fayth, that the secretes of the Lord may be reuealed vnto vs. As for Kynges and Emperours, if you wyl yet aske, why could they not see it, but cōmit themselues vnto so great slaucrye: alas poore creatures, how could they see in the mydst of so great darknes? How could they reade, when the booke was fast sealed? Howe couldc they discerne the voyce, when they heard no sound but of tinckling Cymbals? But this was the great subtiltye and craft of Sathan. He knoweth how wyllingly we be caryed to worldly studies, and whether we dyd incline, hether he thrust vs headlong. He knoweth what corruption he hath sowen in our nature, and how vnwillingly we medle with the things of God: and therefore it was an easy practise for the Pope his Ministet, to pull away heauenly cares from all Princes gouernmentes. They are greeuous vnto flesh and bloude, and suche as Kynges loue not to meddle withall. This was one meane why Princes dyd not theyr duty. An other was as great as this: they heard the Pope so magnified, that they thought him halfe a God. whē they

Luk.16.1.
Mat.25.6
Lu.12.20.
2. Thessa. 2.4.
Heb.4.16
Apo.15.8
Apo.5.2.

were

were once perswaded the Popes pardons shoulde be no small discharge, who would not wyllyngly submit hym selfe wyth all humilitye to receiue it? If we may lyue all our lyfe in ryot, and yet after thorow the Popes blessing rest in the peace of the Church: who would refuse any popish subiection? Make men once dronke wyth thys opinion, and they are at your commaundement to do what you wyll: Barefoote and bareleg they wil wayte at your gate, set your foote if you will in the Emperours necke, he wyll refuse no villany.

Well, now that God hath delyuered vs out of that kyngdome of darkenesse, now we knowe the Pope to be Antichrist, his prayers to be euyll, hys pardons to be worse then the synne of witchcraft: let vs looke at the last to our own dutye, and trust no more to suche a broken staffe. If God hath made vs Princes or Magistrats, let vs feede hys people in Iacob, and hys inheritaunce in Israell. This is our duty, let vs harken vnto it: and that we may do it the better, let vs inquire how it may best be discharged. And I beseech your Maiestie to harken, I wyll speake nothyng accordyng to man, whych may easelye be contemned: but that which I wyll speake, shall be out of the mouth of the Lord: In obeying whereof shall consist your safegard, and the health of your kingdome.

The safegarde of a Prince is true obedience to God.

Especially and aboue all things looke vnto your Ministery. Ther is no cōmaundement geuen oftner in the old testament: none geuen oftner in the new. When God would specially blesse the people of Israel, he scattered the Leuits among the other tribes, that the Law myght bee taught in all the coastes of Iewry. When Christ would bring into the world the light of the Gospel, he sent forth hys Apostels to preach vnto euery creature. In the

Nume.

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old law God signified by manye outward tokens, how necessary the Priesthod was for the instruction of hys people, and what Priests he requyred.

Ex. 25. 19 The Staues wer alwaies in the rings of the Arke, the Lampe euer burning, to shew that the Priests should alwayes declare the wyll of God vnto hys people, and offer vp the sweete incense of continual

Exod. 28 prayer. On the neather end of the robe of the Ephod, were bels alway sounding, to teach that the

33. 34. 35. Priest should be euer heard, where soeuer he dyd go, and shew him selfe a Messenger of the Lord of

Exo. 28. hostes. In the breast plate he had Urim & Thumim, two lyuely presentations of Gods presence,

30. to be witnesses vnto the Priest of hys knowledge and righteousnes. In the plate of gold vpon hys

Ex. 28. 36 forehead was engrauen in great golden letters, holynesse vnto the Lord: to testifye hys vpryght lyfe and conuersation. God forbad any straunger to enter in among them, except hee were circumcised in hart. And of the Children of Aaron, if any had faulted in his ministerye, he should by no repentaunce be receiued againe to the Priesthood. Thys was the care that God had then of hys Priesthood, that he might keepe in holynes all the children of Israell.

This is the care that we must haue of our Ministerye, if we will haue the Gospell of Christ to grow. This care was greatest vnto the godlye Rulers and Princes of Israell, to the ende they might keepe the sanctuary vndefiled. This care must be greatest in thole that be Christian Magistrates, if they loue Gods glorye, and the increase

1. Re. 2. 25 of his Gospell. Thus did King Salomon in the

2. Croni. beginning of his raigne, when he put downe Abi-

18. 78. athar, and made Sadoc hye Priest. Thus dyd Iosaphat, when to reforme religion he sent forth

Le=

Leuites into the coastes of Israell. Thus dyd Ezechias at the entraunce of his kingdome, when this was his first care, how the Leuites myght be prouided for. But of all other Moyses, who had receyued the commaundement of God hym selfe, as appeareth, dyd especially see what was the necessitye of the Minister. In the. 33. of Deuteronomie, a litle before his death, thus he maketh hys prayer: Let thy Vrim & Thumim be wyth thy holy one, whom thou diddest proue in Masah, and dydst cause hym to serue at the vvaters of Meribah, who said vnto his father & to his mother: I haue not sene them, neither knoweth he hys brethren, nor yet hys own children, but they obserued thy vvord, and kept thy couenaunt. They shall teach Iacob thy iudgementes, and Israell thy law. They shall put insense before thy face, and burnt offring vpō thy aulter. Blesse O Lord his substaunce, and accept the vvorke of hys hands. Smite through the loynes of thē that ryse vp agaynst hym, and of them that hate hym, that they rise not vp againe. Marke I beseche you, both hys great care how the Leuites might prosper, and his notable describing of them, what maner of men they shall be. First he prayeth that true knowledge and vnderstanding be neuer remoued from them: their affection towardes Gods Sanctuarye may be suche, that neither father nor mother, wyfe nor chyldren do keepe them backe from obedience to the law and couenant. O that our Ministers were such as Moyses prayed for.

2 Re. 18. 2. Corin. 29. 4. 5. 6. 7. &c. Deute. 33. 8. 9. 10. 11.

for. Then no doubt God would bleſſe them according to their requeſt, and confound their aduerſaries that riſe vp againſt them. And here alſo marke his great zeale for their proſperitye. He was the pacienteſt man, and had the myldeſt nature of all the people of Iſrael: yet could he not ſuppres hys good and great affection, but brake out into theſe wordes: Smite thorow the loynes of them that ryſe vp againſt hym, and of them that hate him, that thei riſe not vp again. O Lord if Moiſes had lyued in our dayes, and ſeene thys adulterous generation that ſo ſpoileth the Leuits, how would his zeale haue beene inflamed againſt them? He would haue cryed out as good Nehemias cryed: Plague them O Lord, that defile thy Prieſthood. And good were it for theſe ſynfull men, that God would ſend his plagues vpon them, while yet they haue time to repent. Now we want a Moyſes to pray for their puniſhment, for they ſleepe in their ſynnes: and God I feare hath reſerued them to a greater puniſhment. The Lord graūt vs grace to remember the latter ende, and now looke while it is yet time, to the good order of the Miniſterie. When God promiſed to eſtabliſh hys mercies wyth hys Church, he promiſed thus, as the greateſt token of hys loue: I wyll geue you Paſtors according to my hart, that I hall feede you with knowledge and vnderſtanding. when he would haue them haue ſure hope that he was their God, and they were hys people, he ſayd he would geue them Leuites that ſhould teach hys people the difference betweene the holy and prophane, betweene the vncleane and the cleane: he promiſed them thys as a perpetuall co-

Nehem. 5.14.cap. 13.29.39.

ere.3.15.

uenaunt:

uenaunt: The lyps of the Priest shall keepe knowledge, and they shall seeke the Law from hys mouth: For hee is the Messenger of the Lord of hostes. And this was ỹ charge that God gaue straightlye vnto the Priesthoode: That they should tell hys people of their syns, and the house of Iacob their offences. A mysserable common wealth must it needes be, & farre seperated from God and hys mercyes, that hath blynd leaders, who cānot leade them selues. Who so feareth the Lord will surelye looke vnto it, that he mayntaine no such offences within hys kyngdome, nor nourish any such sores in the body of his country. If a man be once called to the ministery, let him attend vpon hys flocke, and feede them as his duty bindeth him, wyth the foode of lyfe, or let him be remoued. Chryst sayd: Pasce, pasce, pasce, Feede, feede, feede. This charge he hath geuen, euen as we loue hym, so to see it executed. Saye what we will say, and the more we say it, the more impudently we shall lye, if we say we loue him, while we keepe not his cōmaundements. Would to God we were wise to vnderstand it. Chryst sayd, they are the salt of the earth, and what shall be done with them, if they can season nothing? Chryst sayd, they are the light of the world, and what heape of miseries shal they bring with them, if they them selues be darke? Chryst sayd they be the watchmen: and what case shall the City be in, if they do nothing but sleepe, and delight in sleeping? Who seeth not these incurable sicknesses, that can see any thyng? They are the Pastors, & how hungry must the flocke be, when they haue no foode to geue them? They are the

Mala. 2. 7

Esay. 58. 1

1. Pet. 5. 2.

Iohn. 21. 16. 17. 18.

Mat. 5. 13.

teachers, and how great is the ignoraunce, where they them selues knowe nothyng? They are the Euangelistes or Messengers of glad tidinges, how litle hope haue they, and what slender fayth, whose Messengers cannot tell what the Lorde sayth?

The Lorde enlarge within your Maiestye, the bowels of mercy, that you may once haue pity vpon your poore Subiectes. This cogitation made Paule say to Timothy, a paynfull Father vnto a carefull Childe: I charge thee before God, & before the lord Iesus Christ, that shal iudge the quicke and dead at his appearaunce, and in his kingdome: preach the woord, be instant, in season, & out of season: reproue, rebuke, exhort, &c. Of al miseries wherwyth the Church is greeued, none is greater then this: ẏ her Ministers be ignoraunt, & can say nothing. What coulde Ieroboam doe more then thys, to strengthen all hys Idolatrye, then to make hym Priests of the lowest of the people? What coulde haue made Asa (beyng otherwyse religious) so soone to haue turned away frō the seruice of God, sauing onely he suffered his people to be without a Priest, which could teach thē the word of God? What plague did God threaten greater agaynst a rebellious people, then that he would take from them their true Prophets? When were the peoples syns so ripe to procure vengeaunce, as when their Preachers were dum Dogs, and could not barcke? And what I besech you is our condition better? Or what be many Ministers of our time and Country, other then dum Dogs? Surely, as Ahiiah said of the people of Israel, so we may say of our ministers: Haue we not made vs Priests

Timo. 2.

Re. 13. 33

Croni. 8.

Esay. 32.

Esa. 56. 10

Croni. 3. 9.

lyke

lyke the people of our country: Who so euer commeth to consecrate with a yong Bullock, & seuen Rams, the same may be a Priest for them that are no Gods. And so surelye if we serued Baal, a great number of our Priests at this day wer tollerable: But if we serue the Lord, what do they with that function they cannot skil of: Let them returne againe to their olde occupation. And yet this is but one euyll, and if it were reformed, yet much ill were amysse. If I would declare vnto your Maiesty all the great abuses that are in our Ministery, I should leade you along in the spirit as God did the Prophet Ezechiel: & after many intollerable euils, yet I shal say styl vnto you, behold you shall see no abominations then these. Ezech. 8. 4. 5. &c.

I would first leade you to your Benefices, and beholde some are defiled with Impropriations, some with Sequestratiõs, some loden with Pensions, some robbed of their commodities. And yet behold more abominations then these. Looke after this vpon your Patrones, and loe some are selling their Benefices, some farmyng them, some keepe them for their Children, some geue them to Boyes, some to Seruing men, a verye few seeke after learned Pastors. And yet you shal see more abominations then these. Looke vpon your Ministery, and ther are some of one occupation, some of a nother, some shake bucklers, some Ruffians, some Hawkers and Hunters, some Dicers and Carders, some blinde guides and cannot see, some dum Dogs and wyll not barck. And yet a thousand moe iniquities haue now couered the Priesthoode. And yet you in the meane whyle that all these whoredomes are committed, you at whose handes God wyll require it, you syt styll, and are careles, let men do as they list. It toucheth not

belike your common wealth, and therfore you are so well contented to let all alone. The Lord encrease the giftes of hys holye spirite in you, that from fayth to fayth you may grow continually, til that you be zealous as good king Dauid, to worke his wil. If you know not how to reforme this, or haue so litle counsel (as mans hart is blinded) that you can deuise no way, aske counsel at ỹ mouth of the Lord, ỹ his holy wil shalbe reuealed vnto you.

To reforme euil Patrones, your Maiesty must strengthen your lawes, that they may rule as wel hye as low. As Esdras sayd once, so may I saye now: The handes of the Princes and Rulers
Esdr. 9. 2. are chiefe in this trespasse. If you wyll haue it amended, you must prouide so that the hyghest may be afrayd to offend. To keepe backe the ignorannt from the Ministerye, whom God hath not called to suche a function, take awaye your authority from the Bishops, let them not thus at their pleasure make Ministers in their Closset, whomsoeuer it pleaseth them. To stop the inconueniences that grow in the Ministerye by other, who say they are learned and can preach, and yet do not, that are as I said dum Dogs, and wil not barcke, bridle at the least their greedye appetites, pull out of their mouthes these poysoned bones, that they so greedelye gnawe vpon. Take away Dispensations, Pluralities, Totquots, Nonresidences, and such other synnes. Pull downe the court of Faculties, the Mother and Nurce of all such abominations. I tell you thys before God, that quickeneth althinges, and before our Lorde Iesus Christ, that shall iudge the quicke and the dead in his appearaunce, and in his kingdome: amend these horrible abuses, ỹ the Lord is on your right

right hand, you shall not be remoued for euer. Let these things alone, and God is a righteous God, he wyll one day call you to your reckoning. The God of all glorye open your eyes to see hys hygh kingdome, and enflame your hart to desire it.

The third thing that I sayd in thys place was to be noted, was of Dauid himselfe, how faithfully he executed that wherunto he was called. The Prophet sayth, He fed them in the sincerity of hys hart, and guided them with the discretion of hys handes. An excellent vertue, & meete for kyng Dauid, that was a man according to the hart of God. He knew that obedience was better then sacrifice: and that Gods people were neuer better ruled, then when their Princes brought into captiuity their own vnderstandyng, and in simplicity of hart wer obedient onely to the wisdome of God. He had to good experience of his own wisdome, and had tryed it often how it made him to rebell: therfore to please God effectually, he walked in his simplicity. O that our Christian Princes had so great measure of Gods holye spirit: how manye & greuous burthens should then be taken from vs, that nowe Christian eyes and eares can hardly beholde and heare. How manye synnes should be extinct & buryed, that now vaine polecy doth maintaine and strengthen? The time is past, and I wyll say no more.

The God of all mercy, and Father of all consolation, enspire our harts with wisedome, that we may walke before God in our owne simplicitye. That what hys holy woord hath spoken, we may humbly heare, and reason not agaynst it, because of our common wealth. Then shall we end these short and euyll dayes wyth gladnes. And when

Christ

Christ shall appeare in glory and maiesty to iudge the quicke and dead, we shall stand on the ryght hande, in the number of hys Elect, and heare that last and happiest sentence that neuer shall be called backe agayne: Come ye blessed of my Father, and possesse the kyngdome whych is prepared for you, from the beginnyng of the world. The which time the Lord bring hastely vpon vs, euen for hys Sonnes sake Iesus Christ our Sauiour: to whom wyth the holy Ghost, three persons and one God be all honour, and glorye both now and euer.

Amen.